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Message Text

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---------- 071776
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION GENEVA
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FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO PARIS, SOFIA,
ZAGREB FROM BELGRADE MAY 25.

QUOTE BELGRADE 2331.

E. O. 11652: N/ A
TAGS: SNAR YO BU
SUBJECT: MEETING OF BULGARIAN AND YUGOSLAV CUSTOMS EXPERTS

REF: BELGRADE 2284

1. SUMMARY: EMB NCO SPOKE WITH YUGOSLAV CUSTOMS COUNSELOR FOR SMUGGLING, MILAN IVKOVIC, CHIEF OF YUGOSLAV CUSTOMS (SUC) DELEGATION TO WORKING LEVEL GROUP ON SMUGGLING HELD UNDER AUSPICES OF MIXED CUSTOMS COMMISSION OF BULGARIAN AND YUGOSLAVIA. INCREASED COOPERATION BETWEEN TWO SERVICES BODES WELL FOR FUTURE ENFORCEMENT EFFORT, BUT EMBASSY MAINTAINS SOME RESERVE IN PREDICTING AN INCREASE IN SEIZURES. END SUMMARY.

2. MIXED COMMISSION OF BULGARIAN AND YUGOSLAV CUSTOMS OFFICIALS HAS ARRANGED FOR SEMI- ANNUAL (APRIL AND OCTOBER) CONSULTATIONS AT WORKING ROUP LEVEL. SESSIONS ON SMUGGLING WERE HELD IN MID- MAY PARTLY ON YUGOSLAV SIDE NEAR DIMITROV- GRADE CROSSING, PARTLY ON BULGRAIAN SIDE. PARTICIPANTS ALSO
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WERE RECEIVED BY HIGHER RANKING CUSTOMS OFFICIALS IN SOFIA AND BELGRADE.

3. WHILE TALKS WERE NOT DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY AROUND NARCOTICS THEME, PROBLEM OF NARCOTICS SMUGGLING WAS THOROUGHLY DISCUSSED. SEMI- ANNUAL SESSIONS ARE HELD FOR PURPOSE OF INFORMATION EX-CHANGE, BUT GROUP DECIDED TO HOLD JOINT SESSIONS ON JUNE 14 AND 15 WITH LOCAL CUSTOMS OFFICIALS FROM MINOR BORDER CROSSING STATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES TO INTENSIFY ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES AT THOSE POINTS.

4. PARENTHETICALLY, SUC WILL HOLD SMUGGLING SEMINAR LAST WEEK IN MAY, FIRST WEEK IN JUNE IN JESENICE FOR LARGE NUMBER OF SUC OFFICERS FROM POSTS ALONG ITALIAN- AUSTRIAN BORDER. AND, SAYS IVKOVIC, MONEY HAS BEEN AUTHORIZED FOR CONSTRUCTION OF LONG AWAITED TRUCK INSPECTION FACILITIES AT IMPORTANT SENTILJ AND DIMITROVGRAD CROSSINGS.

5. INFORMATION EXCHANGE FROM MEETINGS INDICATES THAT NARCOTICS SMUGGLING PATTERN HAS SHIFTED FROM CAR AND TRUCK TO RAIL TRAFFIC. NO EVIDENCE EXISTS OF MISUSE OF ARICRAFT OR BOATS FOR NARCOTICS SMUGGLING INVOLVING YUGOSLAV OR BULGARIAN TERRITORY. NOR IS THERE EVIDENCE OF SWITCHING NARCOTICS FROM VEHICLE TO VEHICLE WITHIN YUGOSLAV OR BULGARIA. NO NOTICEABLE INCREASE IN MAGNITUDE OF NARCOTICS SMUGGLING HAS BEEN SEEN, BUT BOTH SIDES ARE AWARE THAT NARCOTICS DO GET THROUGH DESPITE INTENSIFIED MEASURES.

6. BOTH SIDES FAVORABLY ASSESSED THEIR COOPERATIVE EFFORT WITH U. S. CUSTOMS AND AGREED THAT FURTHER PROGRESS WOULD BE MADE. IN THIS REGARD IVKOVIC TOLD EMBOFF UNOFFICIALLY THAT SUC WOULD LIKE TO HOLD PROPOSED SEMINAR WITH U. S. CUSTOMS ON THE ADRIATIC COAST IN DECEMBER. INTENSE SUMMER WORK PERIOD AND CROWDED FALL SCHEDULE WOULD MAKE IT VERY DIFFICULT TO HOLD SEMINAR AT EARLIER DATE. THIS CAN BE DISCUSSED OFFICIALLY WITH SUC COUNSELOR POPADIC IN LJUBLJANA (REFTEL).

7. COMMENT: WHETHER ENCOURAGING SIGN OF INTENSIFIED EFFORT WILL PAY OFF IN INCREASED NARCOTIVE SEIZU
ES REMAINS TO BE SEEN.
TRUCK INSPECTION FACILITIES AT DIMITROVGRAD AND SENTILJ, FOR EXAMPLE, CAN BE BELIEVED WHEN THEY ARE SEEN. AND EMBASSY
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STILL BELIEVES THAT LACK OF GOOD NARCOTICS INTELLIGENCE IS ACHILLES HEEL OF ANTI- SMUGGLING EFFORT IN THIS ARE A. UNTIL INTELLIGENCE NETWORK IS IMPROVED, SEIZURES WILL CONTINUE TO BE HIT AND MISS, MOSTLY THE LATTER.
TOON UNQUOTE ROGERS

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